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Food Security Profiling of Salfit Governorate

Working Paper
Series No. 3 - 2009

Socio-Economic and Food Security (SEFSec) Monitoring System in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Based on data produced by the
Palestinian Central Bureau of
Statistics

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Methodology

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. In the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), food security is a direct consequence of access to income and employment. While food is available in the oPt, trade restrictions makes the oPt a net food importer of goods that are not locally produced. The Palestinian population are thus faced with a food system with which they have no sovereignty over and is currently fragile due to the political dimensions of the conflict. As such, the Socio-economic and Food Security survey was developed in order to capture, reliable and updated information on the living conditions of Palestinian households in a rapidly changing political context.

The Socio-Economic and Food Security survey, conducted in January/February 2009 in the West Bank, was designed to meet following objectives:

1. Provide an overview of the socio-economic characteristics of households residing in the West Bank;
2. Differentiate among the socio-economic conditions of Palestinian households according to the criteria of geographic location, locality type, sex, refugee status, and livelihood group;
3. Assess the overall trends in income and expenditure of households in the West Bank over the past 6 months;
4. Assess the changes in food acquisition¹ patterns and coping mechanisms (including the assistance);
5. Measure the assistance received by households and household's evaluation of this assistance; and
6. Provide evidence-based recommendations for food security policy and programming purposes.

The methodology used for this survey is largely consistent with the methodology used in the May 2008 *Joint Rapid Food Security Survey in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA). Considering that the dataset is cross-sectional, the analysis is static as it uses income and consumption. A third variable reflecting the changing socio-economic impact of Israeli measures was added to make the model more dynamic. These variables were used to cluster the data into three clusters of households that are homogeneous with respect to how they were impacted during the past 6 months by the Israeli measures. The households within the clusters were then classified according to their consumption and income levels (3 way crosstabs) based on which the food insecurity levels were determined (for detailed procedures and methodology please see Annex I of the Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey of the West Bank, August 2009).

The following report is a part of the broader socio-economic and food security monitoring system conducted jointly by the World Food Programme and FAO in collaboration with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Governorate Food Security Profiling provides a profile of the characteristics of food insecure households within a specific governorate. For further examination on specific issues, users are encouraged to contact the Palestinian Central Bureau for Statistics.

¹ Food acquisition: from purchase, self-production and gifts (both formal and informal assistance). In the oPt food acquisition mainly depends on household purchasing power, which in turn mainly depends on income (hence employment) and price levels. However, assistance plays a major role in food security and should be regularly monitored to infer impact on household socio-economic status.

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VII. Salfit

A. Population and Demography

Table 1: Percentage of Registered Refugee out of Total Population

| | Registered Refugees | Other | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------|---------------|
| Population | 4,660 | 54,910 | 59,570 |
| Percent | 8% | 92% | 100% |

Source: PCBS Population Census 2007

Salfit governorate is located on the western side of the remaining West Bank and shares a geographical boundary with Qalqilya to the north-west, Nablus to the north-east and Ramallah to its south. Salfit governorate is one of the smallest governorates in terms of population size and is the second smallest in terms of land mass. Salfit makes up 2.5 percent of the total population of the remaining West Bank. The average household size in Salfit is 4.8 persons and 12,410 households reside in Salfit governorate.

Table 2: Distribution of Population by Locality

| | Urban | Rural | Refugee Camps | Total |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Number of Communities | 3 | 17 | 0 | 20 |
| Population | 21,614 | 37,956 | 0 | 59,570 |
| Percent | 36% | 64% | 0 | 100% |

Source: PCBS Population Census 2007

Approximately 8 percent of the Salfit population are registered refugees. Sixty four percent of the total refugee population live in rural areas and 36 percent of the urban population. There are no refugee camps in the Salfit governorate. Unlike other governorates, the Salfit population is spread out within rural areas. Sixty-four percent of the population live in rural areas and 36 percent live in the urban areas.

B. Labour Force

The labour force participation alongside the unemployment rate in Salfit has been fluctuating over time. Between the second quarter and third quarter of 2008, labour force participation was on the decline from 41.6 percent to 40.4 percent. By the fourth quarter, the labour force participation rate increased again to 44.9 percent and decreased by the first quarter of 2009 to 41.7 percent. By the second quarter of 2009, the labour force participation rate increased to 42.5 percent. The unemployment rate in the second quarter of 2008 stood at 20.8 percent and by the third quarter decreased to 18.5 percent to increase again to 19.1 percent by the fourth quarter of 2008. The unemployment rate continued to decline to reach 14.8 percent by the end of the second half of 2009.

Table 3: Labour Force Participation and Unemployment Rate

| | Q2 08 | Q3 08 | Q4 08 | Q1 09 | Q2 09 |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Labour Force participation % | 41.6% | 40.4% | 44.9% | 41.7% | 42.5% |
| Unemployment % | 20.8% | 18.5% | 19.1% | 15.4% | 14.8% |

Source: PCBS Labour Force Surveys, 2nd Half of 2008 to 1st Half of 2009

A closer examination of the absolute figures show that by the second half of 2008, the population aged 15 and above increased by 525 individuals. During the same period, 1,387 individuals entered the labour force while 1,369 jobs were created leaving 18 individuals unemployed. During the first half of 2009, the labour force participants grew again by 533 individuals. Labour force participation dropped by 623 people with the loss of 776 jobs and the creation of only 153 jobs. This means that the drop in labour force participation and unemployment is a result of discouraged workers who are no longer looking for employment who are counted out of the unemployment and labour force participation rate.

Table 4: Change in Population, Labour Force Participation, Employment and Unemployment

| | Q2 08 | Q3 08 | Q4 08 | Q1 09 | Q2 09 | Change 2 nd Half 2008 | Change 1 st half 2009 |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|--|
| Population | 60,464 | 60,917 | 61,374 | 61,834 | 62,298 | 910 | 924 |
| above 15 | 34,886 | 35,147 | 35,411 | 35,676 | 35,944 | 525 | 533 |
| LF participation # | 14,512 | 14,199 | 15,899 | 14,877 | 15,276 | 1,387 | -623 |
| Unemployed | 3,019 | 2,627 | 3,037 | 2,291 | 2,261 | 18 | -776 |
| Employed | 11,494 | 11,573 | 12,863 | 12,586 | 13,015 | 1,369 | 153 |

Source: PCBS Population Census 2007 and Labour Force Survey Rounds

C. Wages and Prices

In the second quarter of 2008, the nominal daily wage in Salfit was 89.5 New Israeli Shekels (NIS) while the real daily wage stood at 80.80 NIS. Real daily wage was 10 percent lower than nominal wages. In the third quarter of 2008, nominal wages increased to 82.3 NIS with real wages at 11 percent lower than the nominal wage. By the fourth quarter of 2008, real wages returned to 10 percent lower than nominal wages. In the first quarter of 2009, the nominal wage stood at 92.2 NIS while real wages stood at 84.4 NIS; real wages were 8.4% lower than nominal wages indicating an almost 2 percent improvement in household purchasing power.

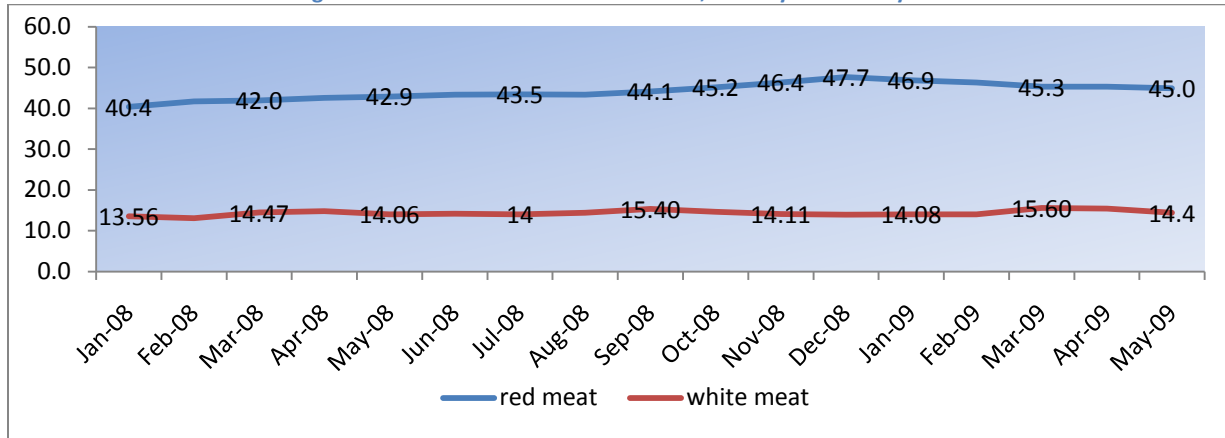
Table 5: Nominal Wages vs. Real Daily Wages

| | Q2 08 | Q3 08 | Q4 08 | Q1 09 | Q2 09 |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Average nominal daily wage NIS | 89.5 | 92.5 | 96.4 | 92.2 | 105.2 |
| Average real daily wage NIS | 80.8 | 82.3 | 86.5 | 84.5 | 96.0 |

Currently, no data has been collected at the Salfit governorate level on the consumer price index. Therefore, the prices of basic food commodities have been selected for the West Bank in order to provide an overall sense of the socio-economic situation of households in relation to food prices.

In the beginning of 2008, the cost of red meat was 40.40 NIS per kilo. Prices of red meat increased slowly so that by the end of 2008, the cost of red meat was 47.70 NIS per kilo. The prices of red meat decreased by the end of the second half of 2008 to 45 NIS per kilo although slightly higher than the long term average. In January 2008, the price of chicken was 13.56 NIS per kilo and consistently increased until September 2008 when it reached its peak of 15.40 NIS per kilo in that year. From January to February 2009, the price of chicken stabilised but increased again to 15.60 NIS per kilo and decreased again by May 2009 to 14.49 NIS per kilo.

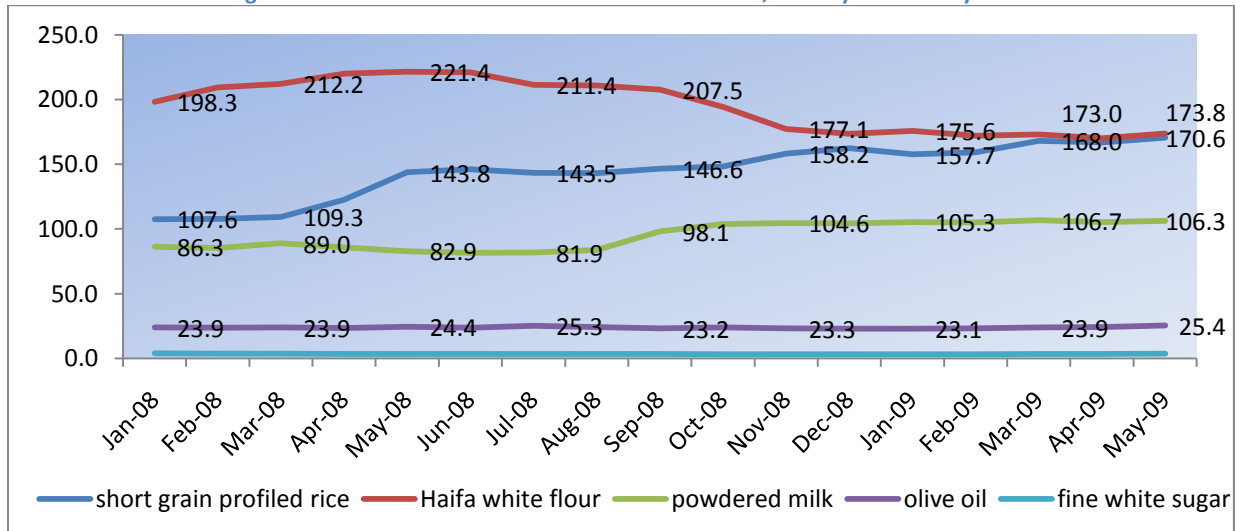
Figure 1: Prices of Red Meat and Chicken, January 2008 - May 2009



Source: PCBS Data

With the exceptions of olive oil and white sugar, which remained relatively stable between January 2008 and the second half of 2009, the prices of other selected food commodities have fluctuated significantly during this observed period. The figure below shows that the cost of Haifa white flour stood at 198.30 NIS and rose to 221.40 NIS by May 2008. Prices sharply decreased to 177.10 NIS by November 2008 to increase incrementally to 173.80 NIS in May 2009, but still much lower than the long term average. Short grained profiled rice cost 107.6 NIS per kilo in the beginning of January 2008 and soared to 170.6 NIS per kilo by May 2009; a 59 percent increase from the January 2008 price. The price of powdered milk increased in March 2008 to drop again by July 2008 and consistently increased from July 2008 to reach 106.3 NIS by May 2009. Similar to other governorates, the price of olive oil and fine white sugar remained relatively stable.

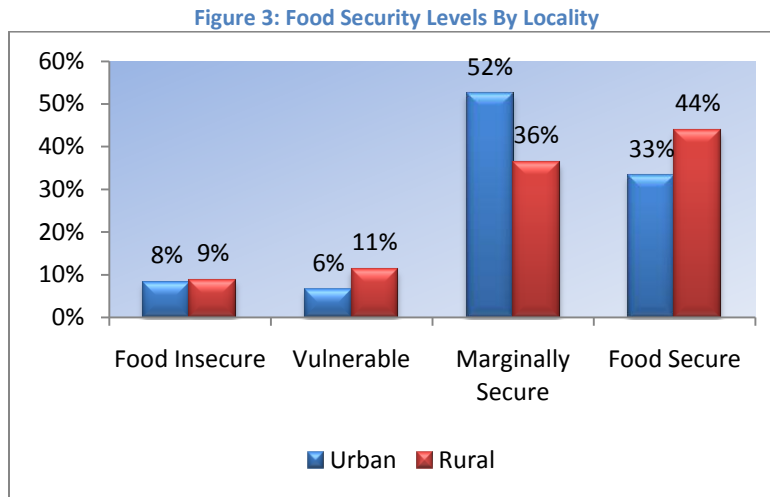
Figure 2: Basic Price Indicators of Selected Food Items, January 2008 – May 2009



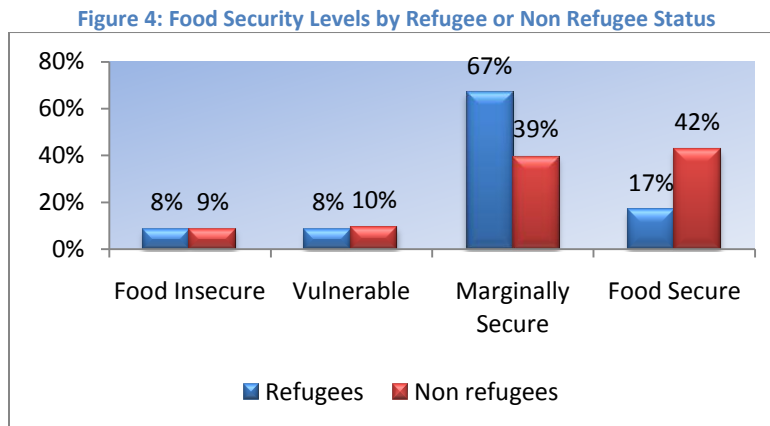
Source: PCBS Data

D. Food Insecurity Levels

Previous findings show that the prevalence of food insecurity in Salfit is lower than the remaining West Bank average.² The prevalence of food insecurity is almost balanced between urban and rural localities. Out of the total rural population, 9 percent of the population are food insecure compared to 8 percent of the population living in urban areas. Food security levels are higher in rural areas (44 percent) compared to urban areas (33 percent). Over half of the urban population in Salfit are marginally secure, compared to 36 percent of the rural population.



The non-refugee population in Salfit has a 1 percent higher level of food insecurity than the refugee population; 9 percent compared to 8 percent. Non-refugee households register a 2 percent higher level of vulnerability to food insecurity than refugee households. At the same time, non-refugee households account for 42 percent of the food secure population in Salfit, compared to just 17 percent of refugees in the governorate being food secure. Combined, refugees show a slightly higher level of food security and marginal security than non-refugees (84% compared to 81%).



² According to the findings reported in the Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey Report 1 of the West Bank, Salfit displayed the lowest prevalence of food insecurity compared to the rest of the governorates.

E. Gender of Head of Household and Food Security Levels

A total of 12 percent of households in the remaining West Bank are female headed households leaving 88 percent of households headed by males. In comparison, 7 percent of Salfit households are female headed while 93 percent of households are male headed.

Table 6: Percentage of Male and Female Heads of Households vs. Remaining West Bank

| | Salfit | Remaining West Bank |
|--------------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Male Headed Households | 93% | 88% |
| Female Headed Households | 7% | 12% |

Figure 5 indicates that a greater prevalence of food insecurity exists amongst female headed households; 30 percent of female headed households compared to 7 percent of male headed households. In comparison, the combined totals of households that are food secure and marginally secure is much higher amongst male headed households (84 percent) than female headed households (59 percent). In absolute terms however, greater numbers of male headed households are food insecure compared to female headed households.

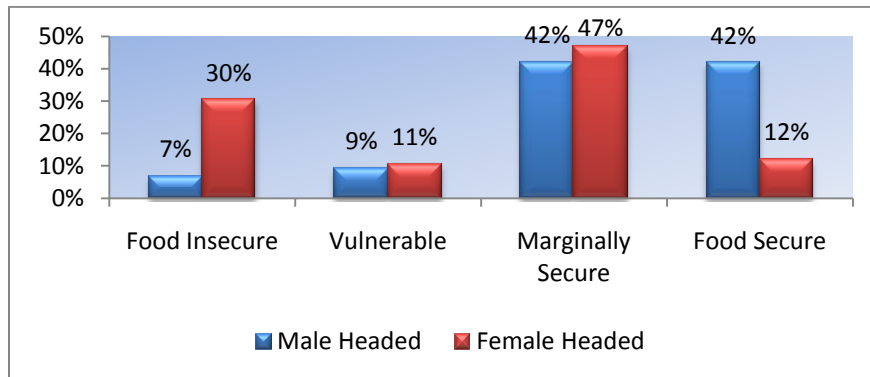


Figure 5: Food Security Levels by Gender of Head of Household

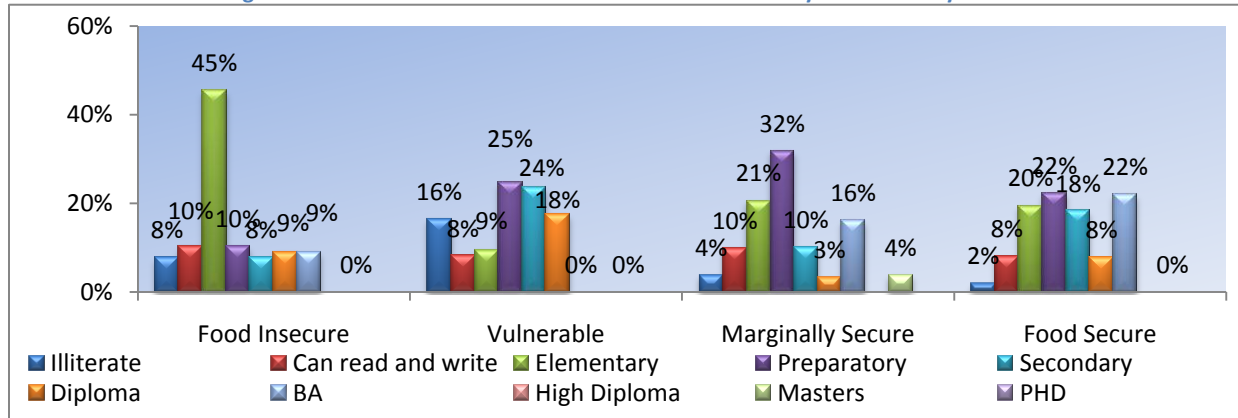
F. Education of Head of Household and Food Security Levels

Education levels amongst food insecure heads of households are generally low compared to the food secure with the vast majority (45 percent) of food insecure heads of households having completed elementary education as their highest levels of educational attainment. Higher levels of illiteracy rates are also found between the food insecure and food secure; 8 percent of food insecure household heads are illiterate compared with 2 percent of food secure household heads.

Ten percent of food insecure household heads report being able to read and write however, 8 percent of food secure household heads also report being able to read and write as their minimum level of educational attainment. The vast majority (45%) of food insecure heads of households report elementary education as their highest level of educational attainment. Preparatory level education appears to be the minimum level of educational attainment needed for heads of households as 32

percent of them are marginally secure and 22 percent are food secure while at the same time 15 percent are vulnerable to food insecurity and an additional 10 percent are food insecure.

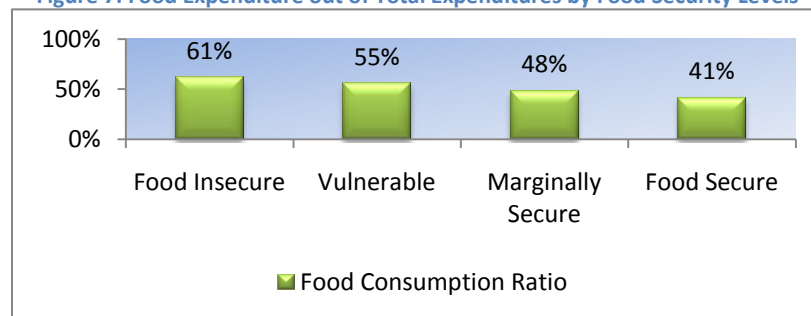
Figure 6: Educational Attainment of Head of Households by Food Security Levels



G. Food Consumption and Income levels

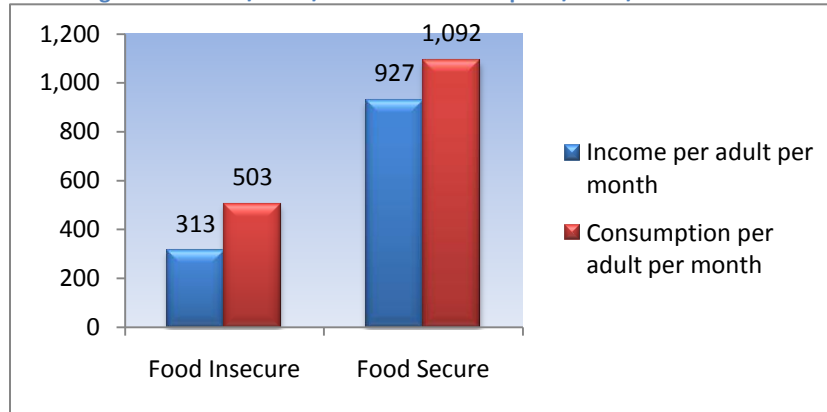
The food consumption level measures the total amount of income spent on food in comparison to those spent on non food items. Across the food security levels with the exception of the food secure, the food consumption ratio exceeds the 44 percent set by PCBS, defining the worse off households. Food secure household's food consumption ratio falls below the PCBS threshold at 41 percent. Food consumption levels out of the total expenditure on food among the food insecure households in Salfit is amongst the highest in the remaining West Bank, at 61 percent of the total expenditure. This means that food insecure households in Salfit have less disposable income to spend on other needs such as education and health care.

Figure 7: Food Expenditure out of Total Expenditures by Food Security Levels



Unlike findings of other governorates, food secure households report higher consumption levels compared to income levels whereas the normal trend is for food secure households to report higher income levels compared to income. When considering the aforementioned that Salfit households consume greater percentage of their own production, the findings below become unsurprising. In comparison to other governorates, Salfit's food insecure households have higher average monthly consumption patterns than the rest at an average monthly 503 NIS per adult.

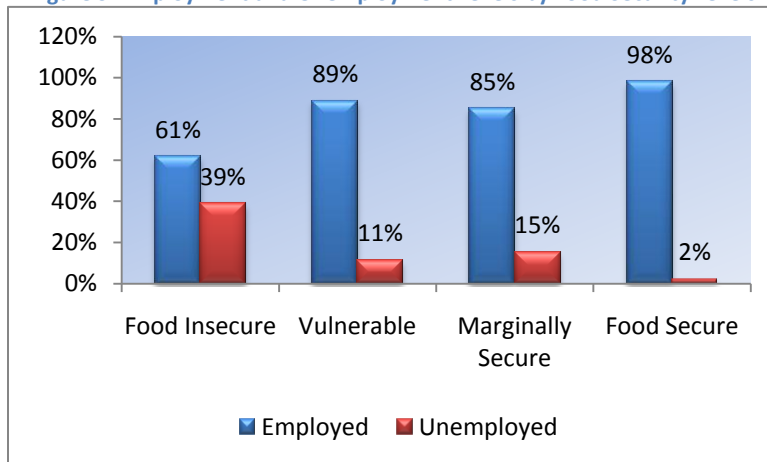
Figure 8: Income/Adult/Month vs. Consumption/Adult/Month in NIS



H. Employment, Occupation and Sector of Employment of Head of households

Employment figures for Salfit among food insecure households (61%) are lower than the remaining West Bank Average (79%). As expected the overwhelming majority of food secure persons are employed (98 percent) and the majority of food insecure persons are unemployed (39 percent). The high level of unemployment among households may be due to the underreporting of employment, particularly if households heads are employed within settlements.

Figure 9: Employment and Unemployment Levels by Food Security Levels



The vast majority of food insecure households are employed in elementary occupations (39%). Another quarter of the food insecure households are in crafts and trade related work while 14 percent are employed as skilled agricultural workers, 12 percent as specialists and 11 percent as plant machine operators. In comparison, only 15 percent of food secure households are employed in elementary occupations. Services and sales employ 26 percent of food secure households and crafts/related trade employ an additional 21 percent.

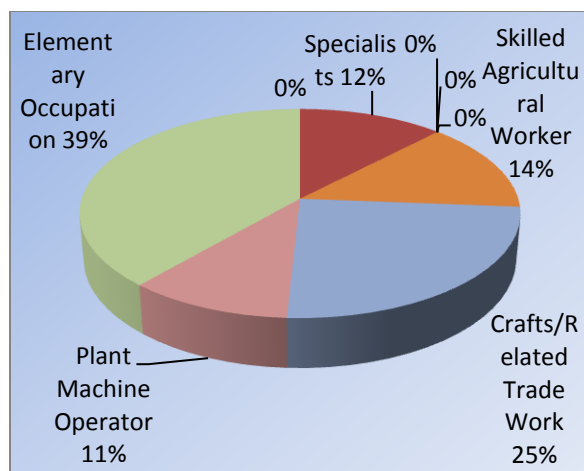


Figure 10: Occupation of Food Insecure Households

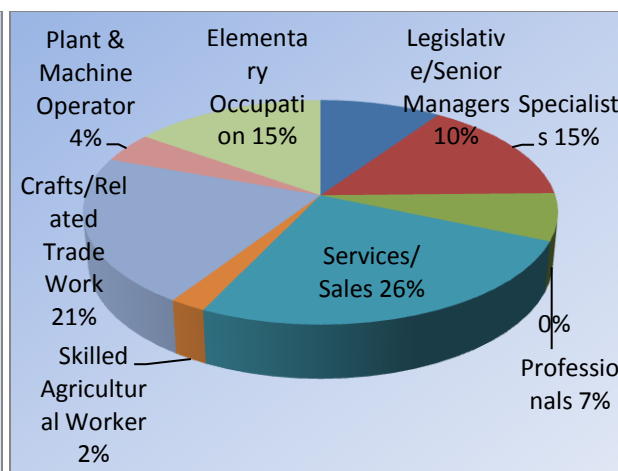


Figure 11: Occupation of Food Secure Households

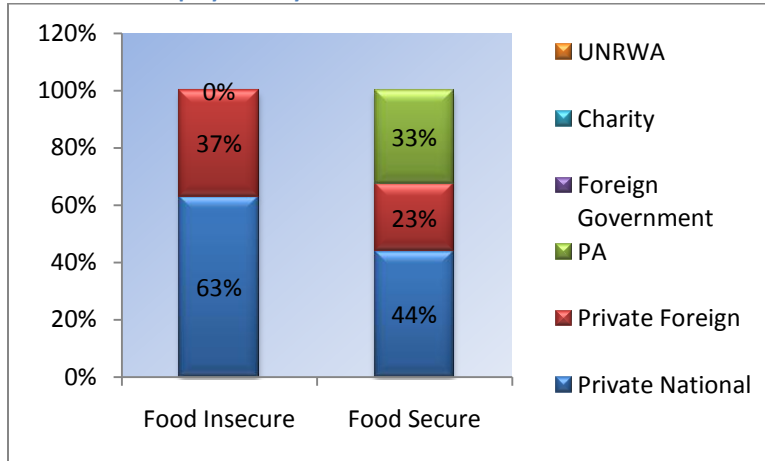
A little over half the food insecure heads of households are employed in the construction sector (51%). The agriculture and fishing sector comprises 14 percent of food insecure households, the whole sale retail trade an additional 12 percent, education employs 12 percent and transport, storage and communication employs 11 percent. In comparison, the vast majority of food secure households are employed in mining and manufacturing with an additional 22 percent employed in public administration and defense. A further 17 percent of food insecure households are employed in construction, 15 percent in whole sale retail trade and 11 percent in education. Areas of Salfit governorate suffers from loss of land due to the construction of the barrier and settlements. The construction and agriculture sector, being most likely influenced by access restrictions and closures are thus the areas in which households have a greater likelihood of being food insecure. Alternatively, public administration or defense and the education sector provide greater opportunities for household food security as these salaries are government wages and are thus reliable.

Table 7: Area of Employment by Food Insecure and Food Secure Heads of Households

| | Food Insecure | Food Secure |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| Agriculture and fishing | 14% | 2% |
| Mining manufacturing | 0% | 28% |
| Construction | 51% | 17% |
| Wholesale retail trade | 12% | 15% |
| Restaurants and hotels | 0% | 0% |
| Transport storage communication | 11% | 2% |
| Finance insurance and mediation | 0% | 2% |
| Properties, rents and commercial businesses | 0% | 0% |
| Public administration and defense | 0% | 22% |
| Education | 12% | 11% |
| Health and social work | 0% | 0% |
| Other social and personal care | 0% | 0% |
| International organisations | 0% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

Figure 12 below refers to the sector of employment of food insecure and food secure heads of households. As shown, all households reporting employment within the Palestinian National Authority (PA) are food secure (33%) suggesting that a regular, reliable government income correlates with a better level of food security. The majority of both food insecure and secure heads of households are employed in the private national sector (63 percent and 44 percent respectively). The private national sector employs a greater number of food insecure heads of households indicating a greater likelihood for households to be food insecure.

Figure 12: Sector of Employment by Food Insecure and Food Secure Heads of Households



The following figure 13 refers to the food insecure and food secure heads of households and the type of jobs in which they are employed. An average total of 38 percent of heads of households in Salfit governorate receive regular wages, with approximately 34 percent receiving irregular wages. As exemplified, self employment and irregular wage work provides a greater degree for household heads to be food insecure.

Out of the food secure households, 44 percent receive regular wages whereas no food insecure heads of households receives regular wages. Only 17 percent and 29 percent of food secure persons are employed in 'wage risk' occupations that are self-employed or irregular wage workers. In conclusion, those in 'wage risk' occupations who are food secure are dependent on sufficient income to meeting their consumption needs.

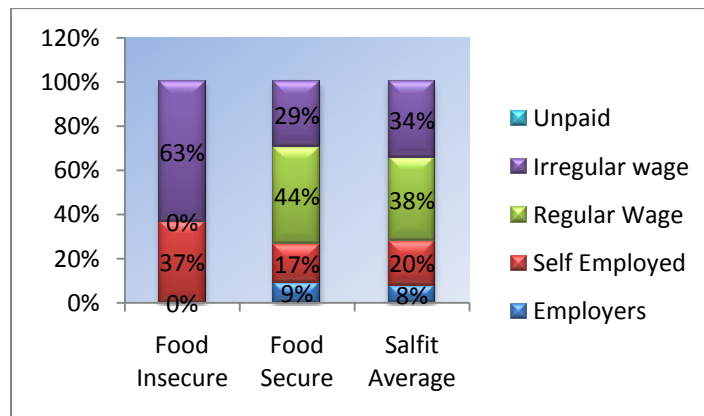


Figure 13: Comparison of Type of Employment

Figure 14 shows 66 percent of food secure household heads are employed in settlements. The prevalence of food security is highest amongst household heads who reported working in settlements at 66 percent. Fifty-seven of heads of households who reported working in Israel are marginally secure suggesting that work in Israel offers good prospects in terms of pay when there is work, but that this work is unreliable due to the political dimensions and the risk of access restrictions. With the exception of the aforementioned, no other conclusions can be drawn on whether the location of household heads employment are a precondition for the food security level as the findings show otherwise.

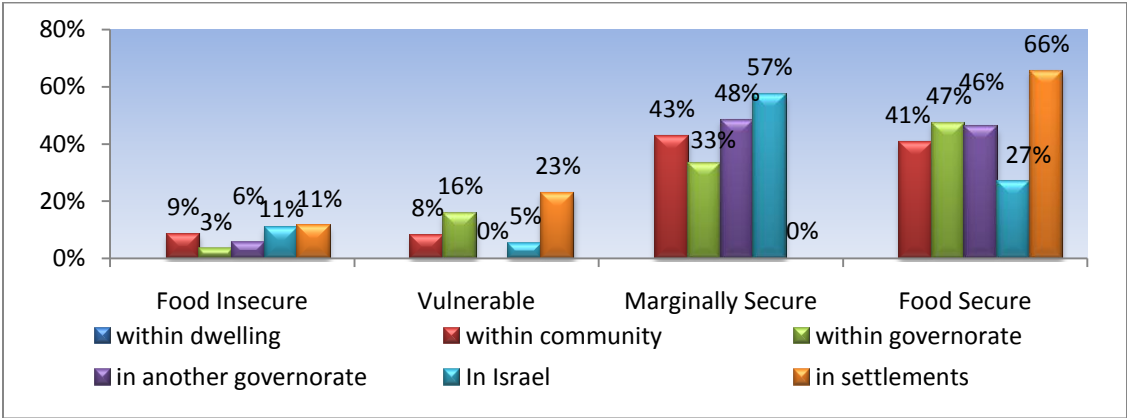


Figure 14: Location of Employment of Household Heads by Food Security Levels

I. Assistance and targeting

Figure 15 below indicates the distribution of assistance in Salfit. Sixty-seven percent of marginally secure households received assistance. This may indicate the distribution of assistance targeted specifically to the marginally secure in order to prevent them from falling into vulnerable and food insecure groups. If so, this is at the expense of 7 percent and 9 percent of households who reported they did not receive assistance but are food insecure and vulnerable to food insecurity. Additionally, fourteen percent of households who reported receiving assistance are food insecure and remained food insecure after receiving assistance.

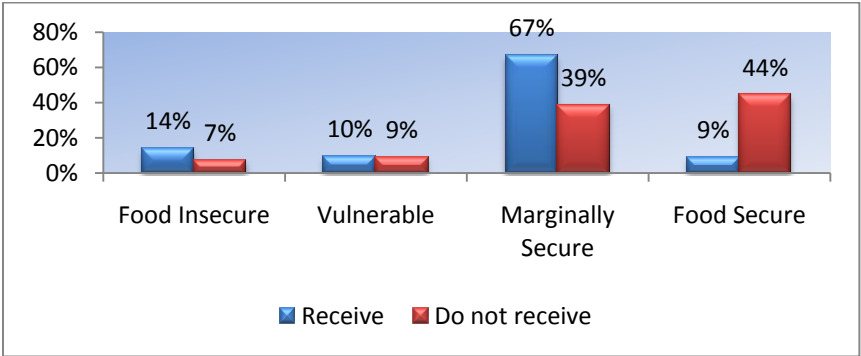


Figure 15: Reported Assistance Received by Food Security Levels

Findings of the survey show that the refugee population reported no assistance was received during the reporting period³. Among the non refugee population the outreach of assistance delivered to the food insecure is extremely low with 71 percent of non refugees reporting that they do not receive assistance.

³ This may be due to a disruption in normal distribution of assistance during the reporting period.

Figure 16: Reported Assistance Received By Refugee and Non Refugee Households

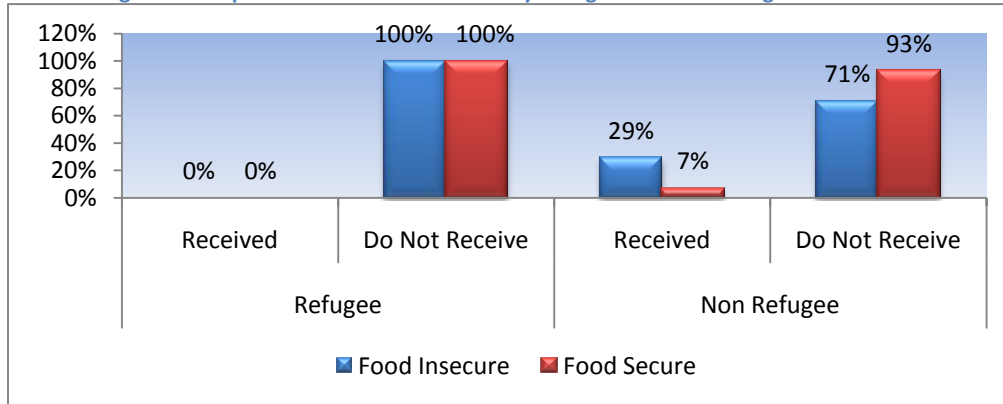


Figure 16 shows the total numbers of households who receive assistance by locality. The comparison of food insecure households by locality shows that rural households are slightly better targeted compared to urban households. Twenty-nine percent among the food insecure rural households reported having received assistance while 22 percent among the urban food insecure households reported receiving assistance.

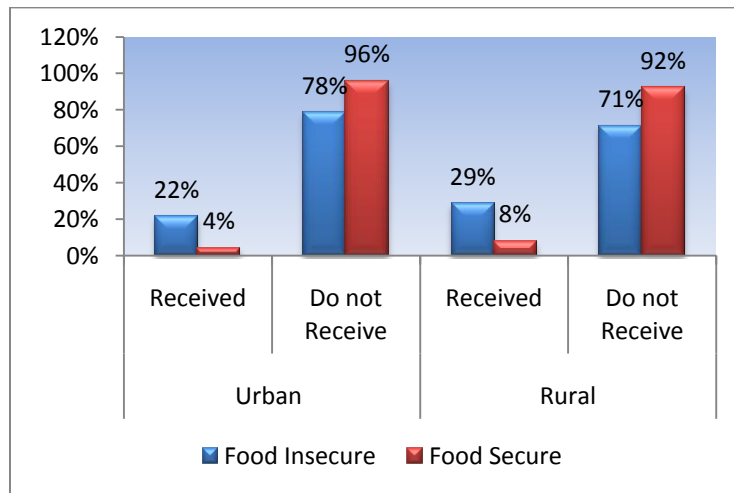


Figure 17: Reported Assistance Received By Locality